

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UN-SEA-H-221

Don't Let Your Clothes Get Dated—

81-089-041

RE-CREATE!

1. 914

P3 P58



U. S. Department of Agriculture
Extension Service

August 1976
Picture Story 296

In many American homes, the fall season is the time to look at the family wardrobe and take stock for the cold weather months ahead.

But not everyone rushes out to buy new clothing. Not these days. Anyone who's recently gone out to buy a suit, a dress, a coat, or any other garment knows that ready-made clothing is costly. Nationally, ready-made clothing costs have risen 21.6 percent since 1970.

So what are people doing today to take care of wardrobe needs? Many are "recreating" clothing. In other words, they're taking old, outdated, unwearable garments and remodeling them so that they fit better, look more fashionable, and seem like new.

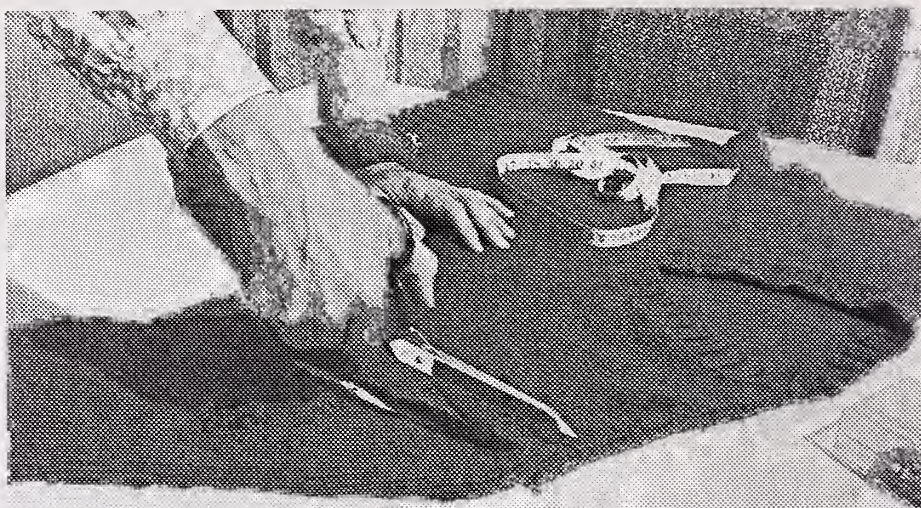
The owner of this coat was about to give up wearing it because it was so out-of-date (left-0576W626-11A). But the fabric had much more wear in it. So—she decided to recreate it (right-0676W737-4A). By taking in the seams, the coat became straighter, less full. Fur trim was used to lengthen it and provide a stylish collar.

Estimated cost to redo: \$12.00.



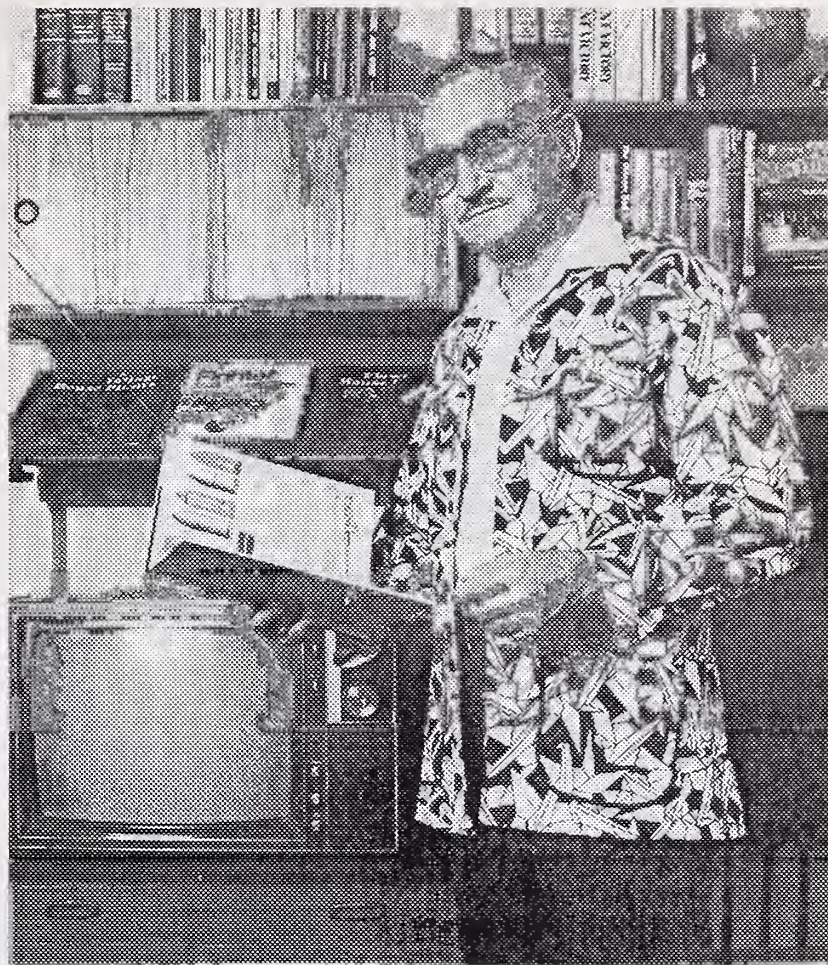


This sweater has a bad hole in the sleeve (0576W624-21A). Do you throw it out? Give it away? Except for the sleeve, the sweater is in good condition. Cut the worn sleeves off (0576W624-29A) leaving about 1½ inches of sleeve. Finish cut edge by adding a zigzag hem. Turn the 1½ inch portion inside and tack loosely into place. It then becomes a sweater-vest (0576W624-32A). Estimated cost if you'd bought this garment new: \$10-\$15.





This heavy, patterned shirt (0576W625-2A) is too good to wear gardening. Its owner would like to wear it for more dress-up occasions but it's not quite the style he likes. How could it be updated? Brown piping was added to the pockets and brown buttons replaced the white ones. Now the shirt can be worn, leisure suit style, with dressy brown pants (0676W737-30A).



Recreating is not a new concept. It probably began in colonial times when people made beautiful "new" quilts from old garments. However, in recent years, ready-made garments became popular and so did the idea of "throw-it-away" if you can't use it. There was even a disposable paper dress on the market at one time.

But today there is renewed interest in recreating clothing. There are approximately 41 million persons doing home sewing in the U.S., spending an average of \$4 billion a year on fabrics, patterns, and machines. Retail sales of yard goods rose from 636 million yards in 1965 to 1,355 million in 1974.

Other than increased clothing prices, people are turning to "recreating" clothing because:

- Many feel they want to conserve more of their environment (including clothes) which means you preserve, protect, and utilize things wisely.
- People have more time to sew and learn sewing skills.
- People realize that their clothes can express something personal about them. People feel more free to "do their own thing" in clothing . . . and, when that "thing" is a one-of-a-kind, handcrafted garment—it's a conversation piece!

Who should attempt to "recreate" clothes? Anyone who is style conscious, concerned about clothing costs, and has or can learn sewing skills. It doesn't necessarily take more skill

to "recreate" a garment than to make something from scratch. It could take more creativeness, more ingenuity, and more design know-how. Some recreated clothes projects are simple, such as lengthening a hem or sleeve. Some, such as making a child's dress from a man's shirt, take more skill.

To decide whether to recreate a garment, ask yourself: Does the old garment fit? Do you like it? Is it in style? A "no" to any of these means you go one step further and decide if the garment is worth fixing. Do you have the time and skills needed to do the job? Are supplies available? Will the finished garment be worth what you put into it? Will you really need it?

Carefully evaluate the condition of the fabric in making your decision. Garments that are faded, printed off-grain, stained, or worn thin are not usually worth recreating. Garments that were not good quality when new are not good bets for recreating either.

There is more information on "recreating" clothing available wherever you are. Check with your County Extension Service, usually listed in your telephone book under County Government. Many Extension home economists all over the Nation are giving this subject high priority by providing classes and publications.

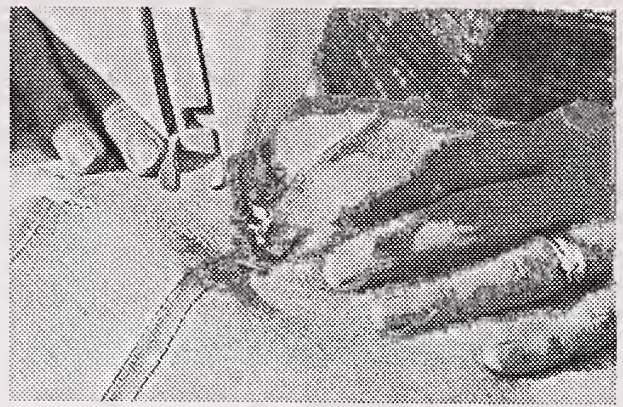


If jeans become too short (0676W739-9A), but the fabric is good—recreate! A jeans skirt is right in fashion (0676W740-3). To make it, open inner leg seams, lay front and back flat, measure length of wearer, cut off bottom of pant legs and use to fill in the triangles created when you lay the garment flat. With some topstitching, the skirt is ready for wearing.

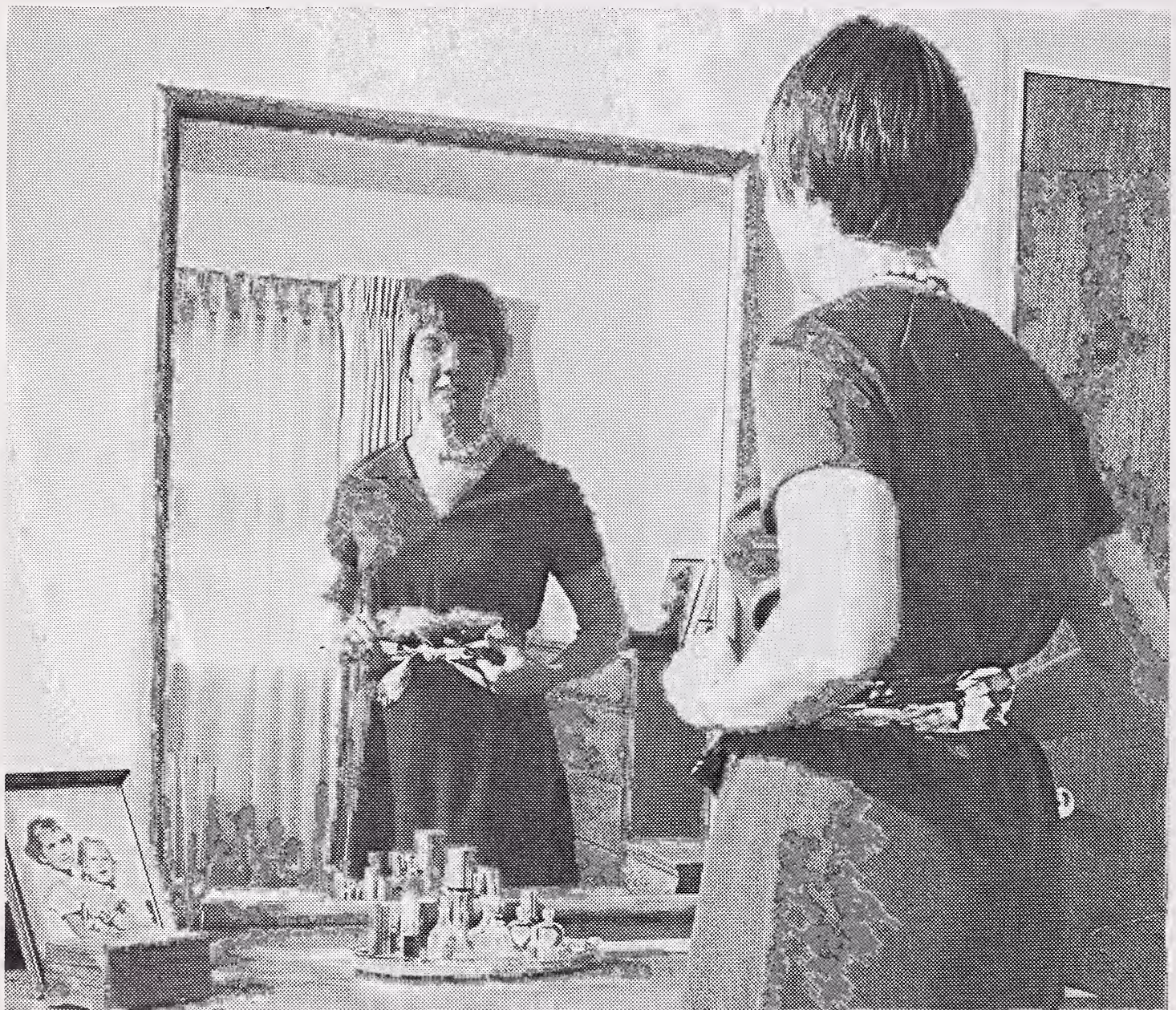


Appreciation is expressed to the Extension Service home economics staff of the University of Maryland for their cooperation in producing this USDA picture story.

USDA Photographs by Fred S. Witte



When lengthening a polyester dress, disguise the old hemline (which you can't press out) by adding several rows of topstitching. Then, add more topstitching to the sleeves or collar to make it look like the designer intended it that way (top-0676W739-27A). An old wool skirt, too short to lengthen, can be cut into a necktie or two. If you bought a wool tie like this new, it could cost \$5.00 and up (right-0576W626-30A). This woman straightened the lines on an old dress and added a patterned obi sash to dress up the waistline. Estimated cost to redo the dress: \$4.00 (bottom-0676W738-28).





Turn a mini dress into this year's style? It can be done by adding strips of fabric, graduated in width for better design. This home-maker added five inches to her dress with a half yard of fabric she had on hand (0576W625-35A). As boys grow out of their pants, lengthen them by adding a cuff of similar material, cut on the bias to make the finished product look more interesting (0576W626-8A).



NOTE TO EDITORS: This picture story was printed using a coarse line screen and is reproducible. Magazines and newspapers may obtain 8x10 glossy prints of these photographs free from the Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Specify title and number of this publication.

